This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims (deleted text being struck through and added text being underlined):

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1        1. (Original) In a network comprising a plurality of computing
2    devices, each computing device having a memory and being capable of
3    accessing the Internet, and at least one of the computing devices being
4    capable of connecting to the Internet, each computing device capable
5    of connecting to the Internet having a connection priority, a method
6    for assigning an Internet gateway for the network, comprising the
7    steps of:
8        broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway
9    from one of the computing devices capable of connecting to the
10   Internet, wherein the request to become the gateway includes the
11   connection priority of the computing device broadcasting the request;
12   and
13       assigning the computing device broadcasting the request as the
14   gateway for the network if the computing device broadcasting the
15   request does not receive a response from the other computing devices
16   within a predetermined time period.

1        2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined
2    time period is approximately 1 to 5 seconds.
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1   3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein each computing
2   device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, further
3   comprising the steps of:
4   broadcasting to the network the IP address of the computing
5   device assigned as the gateway for the network; and
6   storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address
7   broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the gateway for the
8   network.

1   4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the computing
2   device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique
3   client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

1   5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein one of the
2   computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet
3   gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address
4   and a proxy IP address, and further wherein at least one of the other
5   computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by performing
6   the steps of:
7   transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy
8   IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and
9   transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the
10 computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message
11 to be sent to the Internet.

1   6. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the

2   other computing devices capable of connecting to the Internet

3   responds to the broadcasted request to become the gateway by

4   performing the step of:

5   determining whether the connection priority of the respective

6   computing device is higher than the connection priority included in

7   the broadcasted request to become the gateway;

8   if the connection priority of the respective computing device is

9   not higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted

10   request, sending no response to the broadcasted request; and

11   if the connection priority of the respective computing device is

12   higher than the connection priority included in the broadcast request,

13   performing the steps of:

14   broadcasting to the network a request to become the

15   gateway from the respective computing device within the

16   predetermined time period, wherein the request to become the

17   gateway includes the connection priority of the respective

18   computing device; and

19   assigning the respective computing device as the gateway

20   for the network if the respective computing device receives no

21   response from the other computing devices within the

22   predetermined time period.

1   7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the predetermined

2   time period is approximately 1 to 5 seconds.

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1   8. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein each computing

2   device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, further

3   comprising the step of:

4   broadcasting to the network the IP address of the computing

5   device assigned as the gateway for the network; and

6   storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address

7   broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the gateway for the

8   network.

1   9. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the computing

2   device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique

3   client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

1   10. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein one of the

2   computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet

3   gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address

4   and a proxy IP address, further wherein at least one of the other

5   computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by performing

6   the steps of:

7   transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy a

8   IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and

9   transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the

10   computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message

11   to be sent to the Internet.

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1   11. (Original) A storage medium readable by a computing device
2   and having instructions encoded thereon for causing the computing
3   device to perform, in a network comprising a plurality of computing
4   devices, each computing device having a memory and being capable of
5   accessing the Internet, and at least one of the computing devices being
6   capable of connecting to the Internet, each computing device capable
7   of connecting to the Internet having a connection priority, a method
8   for assigning an Internet gateway for the network, the method
9   comprising the steps of:
10   broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway
11   from one of the computing devices capable of connecting to the
12   Internet, wherein the request to become the gateway includes the
13   connection priority of the computing device broadcasting the request;
14   and
15   assigning the computing device broadcasting the request as the
16   gateway for the network if the computing device broadcasting the
17   request does not receive a response from the other computing devices
18   within a predetermined time period.

1   12. (Original) The storage medium of claim 11, wherein each
2   computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address,
3   and further wherein the method further comprises the steps of:
4   broadcasting to the network the IP address of the computing
5   device assigned as the gateway for the network; and
6   storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address
7   broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the gateway for the
8   network.

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1   13. (Original) The storage medium of claim 11, wherein the
2   computing device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned
3   a unique client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP
4   address.

1   14. (Original) The storage medium of claim 11, wherein one of
2   the computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the
3   Internet gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP
4   address and a proxy IP address, and further wherein at least one of the
5   other computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by
6   performing the steps of:
7   transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy
8   IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and
9   transmitting from the proxy IP address of the computing device
10   assigned as the gateway for the network the message to be sent to the
11   Internet.

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1   15. (Original) The storage medium of claim 11, wherein at least
2   one of the other computing devices capable of connecting to the
3   Internet responds to the broadcasted request to become the gateway
4   for the network by performing the steps of:
5   determining whether the connection priority of the respective
6   computing device is higher than the connection priority included in
7   the broadcasted request to become the gateway;
8   if the connection priority of the respective computing device is
9   not higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted
10   request, sending no response to the broadcasted request; and
11   if the connection priority of the respective computing device is
12   higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted
13   request, performing the steps of:
14   broadcasting to the network a request to become the
15   gateway from the respective computing device within the
16   predetermined time period, wherein the request to become the
17   gateway includes the connection priority of the respective
18   computing device; and
19   assigning the respective computing device as the gateway
20   for the network if the respective computing device receives no
21   response from the other computing devices within the
22   predetermined time period.

1   16. (Original) In a network comprising a plurality of computing
2   devices, each computing device having a memory and being capable of
3   accessing the Internet, and at least on of the computing devices being
4   capable of connecting to the Internet, each computing device capable
5   of connecting to the Internet having a connection priority, a method
6   for assigning an Internet gateway for the network, comprising the
7   steps of:
8   broadcasting to the network a request for a new gateway from

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9   one of the computing devices;

10   in response to the request for new gateway, broadcasting to the

11   network a request to become the gateway from each computing device

12   capable of connecting to the Internet, wherein each request to become

13   the gateway includes the connection priority of the respective

14   computing device broadcasting the request to become the gateway; and

15   in response to the request to become the gateway, performing by

16   each computing device capable of connecting to the Internet steps of:

17   determining whether the connection priority of the

18   respective computing device is higher than the connection

19   priority included in the broadcasted request to become the

20   gateway; if the connection priority of the respective computing

21   device is not higher than the connection priority included in the

22   broadcasted request to become the gateway, sending no response

23   to the broadcasted request to become the gateway; and if the

24   connection priority of the respective computing device is higher

25   than the connection priority included in the broadcasted request

26   to become the gateway, performing the steps of:

27   broadcasting to the network a request to become the

28   gateway from the respective computing device within the

29   predetermined time period, wherein the request to become

30   the gateway includes the connection priority of the

31   respective computing device; and

32   assigning the respective computing device as the

33   new gateway for the network if the respective computing

34   device receives no response from the other computing

35   devices within the predetermined time period.

1   17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the

2   predetermined time period is approximately 1 to 5 seconds.

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1   18. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein each computing
2 device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address, further
3 comprising the steps of:
4   broadcasting to the network the IP address of the computing
5 device assigned as the new gateway for the network; and
6   storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address
7 broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the gateway for the
8 network.

1   19. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the computing
2 device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned a unique
3 client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP address.

1   20. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein one of the
2 computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet
3 gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address
4 and a proxy IP address, and further wherein at least one of the other
5 computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by performing
6 the steps of:
7   transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy
8 IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and
9   transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the
10 computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message
11 to be sent to the Internet.

1   21. (Original) A storage medium readable by a computing
2   device and having instructions encoded thereon for causing the
3   computing device to perform, in a network comprising a plurality of
4   computing devices, each computing device having a memory and being
5   capable of accessing the Internet, and at least one of the computing
6   devices being capable of connecting to the Internet, each computing
7   device capable of connecting to the Internet having a connection
8   priority, a method for assigning an Internet gateway for the network,
9   the method comprising the steps of:
10   broadcasting to the network a request for a new gateway from
11   one of the computing devices;
12   in response to the request for the new gateway, broadcasting to
13   the network a request to become the gateway from each computing
14   device capable of connecting to the Internet, wherein each request to
15   become the gateway includes the connection priority of the respective
16   computing device broadcasting the request to become the gateway; and
17   in response to the request to become the gateway, performing by
18   each computing device capable of connecting to the Internet the steps
19   of:
20   determining whether the connection priority of the
21   respective computing device is higher than the connection
22   priority included in the broadcasted request to become the
23   gateway;
24   if the connection priority of the respective computing
25   device is not higher than the connection priority included in the
26   broadcasted request to become the gateway, sending no response
27   to the broadcasted request to become the gateway; and
28   if the connection priority of the respective computing
29   device is higher than the connection priority included in the
30   broadcasted request to become the gateway, performing the steps

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31   of:

32   broadcasting to the network a request to become the

33   gateway from the respective computing device within the

34   predetermined time period, wherein the request to become

35   the gateway includes the connection priority of the

36   respective computing device; and

37   assigning the respective computing device as the

38   gateway for the network if the respective computing

39   device receives no response from the other computing

40   devices within the predetermined time period.

1   22.   (Original) The storage medium of claim 21, wherein each

2   computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address,

3   and further wherein the method further comprises the steps of:

4   broadcasting to the network the IP address of the computing

5   device assigned as the new gateway for the network; and

6   storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address

7   broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the gateway for the

8   network.

1   23.   (Original) The storage medium of claim 21, wherein the

2   computing device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned

3   a unique client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP

4   address.

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1   24. (Original) The storage medium of claim 21, wherein one to
2   the computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the
3   Internet gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP
4   address and a proxy IP address, and further wherein at least one of the
5   other computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by
6   performing the steps of:
7   transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy
8   IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and
9   transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the
10 computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message
11 to be sent to the Internet.

1   25. (Withdrawn) In a network comprising a plurality of
2   computing devices, each computing device having a memory and being
3   capable of accessing the Internet, and one or more of the computing
4   devices being capable of connecting to the Internet, and one of the
5   computing devices being assigned as a current Internet gateway for
6   the network, a method for assigning an Internet gateway for the
7   network, comprising the steps of:
8   detecting a failure to access the Internet through the current
9   Internet gateway by one of the computing devices;
10   in response to the detected failure, dynamically assigning one of
11 the computing devices capable of connecting to the Internet as a new
12 Internet gateway for the network; and
13   automatically reconfiguring each computing device to access the
14 Internet through the new Internet gateway.

1   26. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein each
2   computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address,
3   and further wherein the step of automatically reconfiguring each
4   computing device to access the Internet through the new Internet
5   gateway further comprises the steps of:
6   broadcasting to the network the IP address of the computing
7   device assigned as the new Internet gateway for the network; and
8   storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address
9   broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the Internet gateway
10 for the network.

1   27. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein the
2   computing device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned
3   a unique client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP
4   address.

1   28. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein one of the
2   computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet
3   gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address
4   and a proxy IP address, and further wherein at least one of the other
5   computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by performing
6   the steps of:
7   transmitting from the respective computing device to the proxy
8   IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and
9   transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the
10 computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message
11 to be sent to the Internet.

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1   29. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 25, wherein the step of
2   dynamically assigning one of the computing devices capable of
3   connecting to the Internet as the new Internet gateway for the network
4   further comprises the steps of:
5   in response to the detected failure, broadcasting to the network a
6   request to become the gateway from one of the computing device
7   capable of connecting to the Internet, wherein the request to become
8   the gateway includes the connection priority of the computing device
9   broadcasting the request; and
10   assigning the computing device broadcasting the request as the
11   new Internet gateway for the network if the computing device
12   broadcasting the request does not receive a response from the other
13   computing devices within a predetermined time period.

1   30. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29, wherein the
2   predetermined time period is approximately 1 to 5 seconds.

1   31. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 29, wherein at least one
2   of the other computing devices capable of connection to the Internet
3   responds to the broadcasted request to become the gateway by
4   performing the steps of:
5   determining whether the connection priority of the respective
6   computing device is higher than the connection priority included in
7   the broadcasted request to become the gateway;
8   if the connection priority of the respective computing device is
9   not higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted
10   request to become the gateway, sending no response to the
11   broadcasted request; and
12   if the connection priority of the respective computing device is
13   higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted
14   request to become the gateway, performing the step of:

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15   broadcasting to the network a request to become the

16   gateway from the respective computing device within the

17   predetermined time period, wherein the request to become the

18   gateway includes the connection priority of the respective

19   computing device; and

20   assigning the respective computing device as the new

21   Internet gateway for the network if the respective computing

22   device receives no response from the other computing devices

23   within the predetermined time period.

1   32. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 31, wherein each

2   computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address,

3   and further wherein the step of automatically reconfiguring each

4   computing device to access the Internet through the new Internet

5   gateway further comprises the steps of:

6   broadcasting to the network IP address of the computing device

7   assigned as the new Internet gateway for the network; and

8   storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address

9   broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the Internet gateway

10   for the network.

1   33. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 31, wherein the

2   computing device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned

3   a unique client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP

4   address.

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1   34. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 31, wherein one of the
2   computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy for the Internet
3   gateway and is capable of being assigned a unique client IP address
4   and a proxy IP address, and further wherein at least one of the other
5   computing devices is capable of accessing the Internet by performing
6   the steps of:
7   transmitting from the respective computing device proxy IP
8   address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet; and
9   transmitting from the proxy IP address of the proxy to the
10 computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message
11 to be sent to the Internet.

1   35. (Withdrawn) A storage medium readable by a computing
2   device and having instructions encoded thereon for causing the
3   computing device to perform, in a network comprising a plurality of
4   computing devices, each computing device having a memory and being
5   capable of accessing the Internet, and one or more of the computing
6   devices being capable of connecting to the Internet, and one of the
7   computing devices being assigned as a current Internet gateway for
8   the network, a method for assigning an Internet gateway for the
9   network, the method comprising the steps of:
10   detecting a failure to access the Internet through the current
11 Internet gateway by one of the computing devices;
12   dynamically assigning one of the computing devices capable of
13 connecting to the Internet as a new Internet gateway for the network;
14 and
15   automatically reconfiguring each computing device to access the
16 Internet through the new Internet gateway.

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1   36. (Withdrawn) The storage medium of claim 35, wherein each
2   computing device is assigned a unique Internet protocol (IP) address,
3   and further wherein the step of automatically reconfiguring each
4   computing device to access the Internet through the new Internet
5   gateway further comprises the steps of:
6   broadcasting to the IP address of the computing device assigned
7   as the new Internet gateway for the network; and
8   storing in the memory of each computing device the IP address
9   broadcasted to the network as the IP address of the Internet gateway
10 for the network.

1   37. (Withdrawn) The storage medium of claim 35, wherein the
2   computing device assigned as the gateway for the network is assigned
3   a unique client IP address and assumes a predetermined gateway IP
4   address.

1   38. (Withdrawn) The storage medium of claim 35, wherein one
2   of the computing devices is capable of operating as a proxy having a
3   unique sending IP address and a unique receiving IP address, and
4   further wherein at least one of the other computing devices is capable
5   of accessing the Internet by performing the steps of:
6   transmitting from the respective computing device to the
7   receiving IP address of the proxy a message to be sent to the Internet;
8   and
9   routing from the sending IP address of the proxy to the
10 computing device assigned as the gateway for the network the message
11 to be sent to the Internet.

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1   39. (Withdrawn) The storage medium of claim 35, wherein the
2   step of dynamically assigning one of the computing devices capable of
3   connecting to the Internet as the new Internet gateway for the network
4   further comprises the steps of:
5   broadcasting to the network a request to become the gateway
6   from one of the computing devices capable of connecting to the
7   Internet, wherein the request to become the gateway includes the
8   connection priority of the computing device broadcasting the request;
9   and
10   assigning the computing device broadcasting the request as the
11   new Internet gateway for the network if the computing device
12   broadcasting the request does not receive a response from the other
13   computing devices within a predetermined time period.

1   40. (Withdrawn) The storage medium of claim 39, wherein at
2   least one of the other computing devices capable of connecting to the
3   Internet responds to the broadcasted request to become the gateway by
4   performing the steps of:
5   determining whether the connection priority of the respective
6   computing device is higher than the connection priority included in
7   the broadcasted request to become the gateway;
8   if the connection priority of the respective computing device is
9   not higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted
10   request to become the gateway, sending no response to the
11   broadcasted request; and
12   if the connection priority of the respective computing device is
13   higher than the connection priority included in the broadcasted
14   request to become the gateway, performing the steps of:
15   broadcasting to network a request to become the gateway
16   from the respective computing device within the predetermined
17   time period, wherein the request to become the gateway includes

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18   the connection priority of the respective computing device; and

19   assigning the respective computing device as the new

20   Internet gateway for the network if the respective computing

21   device receives no response from the other computing devices

22   within the predetermined time period.

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1   41. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein broadcasting to the

2 network the request to become the gateway comprising sending the

3 request to more than one computing device.